

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 0614

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CZ

SUBJECT: US-CSSR BILATERAL RELATIONS

1. A NUMBER OF SMALL SIGNS LATELY SEEM TO INDICATE THAT GOC SEES SOME SMALL FORWARD MOTION IN BILATERAL RELATIONS AND WISHES TO SHOW A DEGREE OF RECEPTIVITY AND FLEXIBILITY ON ITS SIDE.

2. AS ONE EXAMPLE, FOLLOWING DELIVERY OF PROTEST NOTE TO CHARGE ON MARCH 9 RE BOMBING OF CSA IN NEW YORK, ZANOTVSKY (HEAD SIXTH DEPT MFA) FACED THE OTHER DIRECTION AND SAID HE WAS GLAD TO INFORM US THAT VISA DIFFICULTIES OF UNION CARBIDE WORKERS IN ZALUZI HAD BEEN RESOLVED. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT US WORKERS THERE HAVE BEEN HAVING PROBLEMS IN OBTAINING ENTRY-EXIT VISAS FOR A LONG TIME, AND CHARGE GAVE NON-PAPER ON SUBJECT TO DEPUTY FONMIN SPACIL JANUARY 26. (PRAGUE 591). WHILE IT IS NO MAGNIFICENT GESTURE TO MEET OUR REQUESTS IN THIS REGARD, IT IS A STEP FORWARD.

3. DURING INTERVIEW WITH SPACIL MARCH 9, DUSKO DODER OF WASHPOST WAS TOLD THAT FAVORABLE RESPONSE TO US PROPOSAL FOR ABOLISHING CLOSED AREAS WOULD BE DELIVERED SHORTLY. (BOTH DAO AND CONFIDENTIAL

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POLITICAL OFFICER WERE TOLD SAME BY OFFICIAL

CONTACTS, SO CLEARANCE PROCESS MUST BE WELL UNDERWAY.) IN GENERAL, SPACIL GAVE DODER OPTIMISTIC ENOUGH PICTURE THAT DODER SAYS HE PLANS TO DO A STORY ON BILATERAL RELATIONS, MENTIONING DAVID SCOTT VISIT AND OTHER RECENT UPBEAT SIGNS.

4. DODER TALKED AT SOME LENGTH WITH SPACIL ABOUT LONG-GRAVEL AMENDMENT AND CLAIMS/GOLD PROBLEM, AND WHILE SPACIL TOOK USUAL GOC LINE THAT IT WAS SERIOUS MATTER, AND BALL WAS IN US COURT, ETC., HE GAVE DODER CLEAR IMPRESSION GOC WAS "FLEXIBLE AND MODALITIES." SPACIL ALSO GAVE DODER IMPRESSION BILATERAL TALKS MIGHT HAVE TAKEN PLACE. CHARGE TOLD DODER EXPLICITLY THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO OFFICIAL REOPENING OF THE QUESTION, ALTHOUGH AROUND THE BORDERS OF THE MATTER SOME CONVERSATIONS HAD TAKEN PLACE, E.G. BY CONGRESSMEN DURING BINGHAM DELEGATION AND VANIK VISITS TO PRAGUE. IN CONVERSATION WITH CHARGE FOLLOWING HIS PROTEST DELIVERY MARCH 9, ZANTOVSKY ALSO SPOKE ABOUT GOC FLEXIBILITY IN CLAIMS-GOLD QUESTION, THUS CONFIRMING IMPRESSION SPACIL GAVE DODER THAT GOC IS KEEPING OPTIONS OPEN ON THIS MATTER.

5. ON THE LESS PLEASANT SIDE, CHARGE BROUGHT UP WITH ZANTOVSKY UNHAPPY TREATMENT DODER GOT UPON ARRIVAL AT PRAGUE AIRPORT, WHEN HE WAS HELD FOR A LONG TIME AND HIS THINGS CAREFULLY SEARCHED. (DODER WAS INCENSED AND TOLD BOTH SPACIL AND ZANTOVSKY, AS WELL AS ANYBODY ELSE WHO WOULD LISTEN, THAT THE AIRPORT MEN WERE "GANGSTERS" AND HE WOULD NEVER COME BACK TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA UNDER SUCH CONDITIONS.) CHARGE TOLD ZANTOVSKY IF GOC BECAME MORE LIBERAL IN VISA ISSUANCE FOR JOURNALISTS, BUT TREATED THEM SO BADLY THEY WOULD NOT COME, THEN PURPOSES OF CSCE FINAL ACT WERE STILL THWARTED. ZANTOVSKY'S ANSWER WAS RELATIVELY SOFT AND CONFIDENTIAL

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CONCILIATORY, AND HE SOUGHT OUT DODER AT CHARGE'S RECEPTION THAT EVENING AND TOLD HIM EXPLICITLY MFA WOULD LOOK CAREFULLY INTO SITUATION. THIS IS NOT MUCH, BUT IT IS BETTER THAN A NEGATIVE ATTITUDE.

6. NONE OF THE ABOVE ADDS UP TO ANYTHING EARTH-SHAKING, BUT IN THE MIDST OF BOMB PRO-

TESTS AND ANTI-RFE CAMPAIGNS AND THE LIKE, WE
HAVE THE IMPRESSION THE CZECHOSLOVAKS ARE
TRYING TO SHOW SOME FRESH INTEREST IN IMPROVING
RELATIONS.
PERRY

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